



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

April 15, 2005

B-19J

Mr. Abdelmoez Abdalla
Federal Highway Administration – Michigan Division
Environmental Program Manager
315 West Allegan Street
Federal Building, Room 201
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Re: Comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)/Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-94 Rehabilitation Project from I-96 to Conner Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, EIS No. 20050071

Dear Mr. Abdalla:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, we have reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-94 Rehabilitation Project from I-96 to Conner. This FEIS evaluates transportation improvements proposed for a 6.7-mile portion of I-94 from I-96 on the west to Conner Avenue on the east. Two major interchanges in this segment, the M-10 Lodge freeway and I-75, are also being proposed for reconstruction.

EPA previously provided comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for this project on May 11, 2001. Our review at that time identified issues dealing with the Scope of Analysis, Purpose and Need, Alternatives Analysis, Air Quality, Noise, Pedestrian and Bicyclist Impacts, Costs, and Cumulative Impacts. Since the time of the DEIS, EPA has met with Michigan Department of Transportation and your Agency to discuss our comments on the DEIS. Through those conversations, it became clear that many of the issues could be readily clarified in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. It also became clear that much ambiguity about the needed highway cross-section could be cleared up because of pending decisions regarding the corridor and its use in the transit system.

The FEIS identified a modified DEIS alternative as the recommended alternative. That alternative consists of four through-traffic lanes in each direction along with redesigned interchanges with M-10 and I-75, acceleration-deceleration lanes, and service drives. The median will include a 14-foot inside shoulder, a 12-foot outside shoulder width, and a 6-10-foot variable median strip in which to place a concrete barrier. Service drives will include two 11-foot travel lanes and an 8-foot shoulder (except between M-10 and I-75), and no reserved space will be held for future transit.

The selection of this recommended alternative and the additional information included in the FEIS and technical reports addresses the issues that we expressed in our May 11, 2001 letter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this FEIS. Please contact Sherry Kamke of my staff at 312-353-5794 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

/s/

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief
NEPA Implementation Section
Office of Science, Ecosystems, and Communities

cc: Margaret Barondess, MDOT